

CONTINUATION
OF THE
MEMOIRS.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY THE

QUEEN.

VOL. II.

CONTINUATION

OF THE

M. E. M. R. S.



ENDORSED TO BE KEPT AT THE

QUEEN.

VOL. II.

C H A P. I.

*Introduction to the new Events of my
Life.*

THE eyes of the whole universe are, at this moment, fixed upon me: Such is the lot of the great. Responsible for their actions to the multitude, prudence and wisdom should ever mark their steps—Woe to that sovereign who, forsaking the paths of virtue, devotes herself to public execration, and hears nothing around her but vows of indignation and exclamations

* This volume appears to have been written at a period much posterior to the first—and is penned by the hand of Antonina herself. Its division into chapters is destructive of that uniformity which is so desirable in works of all kind; but the importance of adhering to the original manuscript has deterred us from any attempt at alteration.

of hatred. My ears are assailed by the cries of grief; my death is an object of desire to a whole people who have been oppressed by the barbarity of my conduct; and even foreigners never pronounce my name without horror. On all sides I behold the image of despair. What a dreadful situation is mine—but alas! I have deserved it too well!

A husband basely dishonoured, children informed of, and reproached with, the defect in their birth, by the public voice; a kingdom overturned, ministers persecuted, a nation plundered, the public treasury pillaged, princes seduced, confidence betrayed, the horrid spectacle of citizens inhumanly massacred, a monstrous assemblage, in short, of vices and unheard-of crimes—Such, Antonina, is the work of thy hands—Such the virtues with which you embellish the throne!

But all this, my mother, you foresaw.—Even at my birth, I was infected with the poison of hatred; you abhorred the inhabitants of Abo, and received the completest satisfaction from the sight of those evils, which my natural disposition, improved by age, led me to inflict on them.

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The annals of your reign are well calculated to mislead posterity with regard to your virtues; the name of Airam Asereht was pronounced with respect and veneration; your affected devotion was universally admired, and the ignorance of your subjects, led away by fanatical error and gross superstition, urged them to prostrate themselves before the hypocritical mask which concealed your destructive projects. In my earliest years I exhibited unequivocal signs of what I should one day become. How could the politicians of Abo be possibly mistaken in my character? What could induce them to adopt, as their future queen, a woman already dishonoured, who had sacrificed her innocence and purity, whose heart was polluted by debauchery, and whose reputation was such as should have effectually excluded her from the illustrious rank which she now enjoys?

Catherine of Medicis, Cleopatra, Agrippina, Messalina,—my crimes surpass your's; and if the remembrance of your infamy still excites horror, and the detail of it occasions an effusion of tears, what sentiments will arise from a knowledge of the cruel and lascivious life of Antonina!

The titles bestowed on me—not by the voice of prejudice, but by that of equity—are those of a barbarous queen, an adulterous wife, and a woman polluted by debauchery. Devoid of pity for the unfortunate, never did the public misery excite the smallest sentiment of compassion in my bosom. Unbridled desires, excess of dissipation, the most frivolous amusements converted into the most serious occupations, indecency and libertinism characterize the first years of a marriage contracted under the most inauspicious auspices. The first part of my life contains a detail of the various events to which a compliance with the different dictates of inclination gave rise. The second will confirm the idea that the nation can have no rational grounds for expecting my return to virtue. I shall be obliged sometimes to refer to past circumstances; but I am resolved not to omit a single transaction.

C H A P.

CHAP. II.

Source of my irregularities—They are carried to an extreme—My decided Taste for nocturnal Amusements.

ON my arrival in Abo, Sirap and the court presented to my sight a scene of luxury that would have alarmed any woman but myself; coquettish, warm, and impassioned, I enjoyed it without reserve, and the enormous expences I incurred soon convinced the few people of sense who were to be found in the kingdom, that a continuation of the same line of conduct would infallibly involve the whole nation in ruin.

Grandpapa* was by this time reduced to a mere machine, whose secret springs were only known to his infamous mistress Yrrabud, who of course guided all his actions.

* The appellation by which Antonina distinguished Silvo the 5th.

Ueilehcir, that animal infected by every disorder which the most disgusting libertinism could occasion, presided over the pleasures of the court. Secret agent of the scandalous orgies of his master and his sovereign, he took advantage of that monarch's humiliating lethargy, to issue and enforce arbitrary and tyrannical laws.

My august husband, shocked at these shameful abuses of power, and disgusted at the inutility of his prudent exhortations, had just broken off all commerce with those who imitated the conduct of Silvo si. My dearest brother-in-law, now *Rueisnam*, was only guided during the decline of the monarchy, by the dictates of intemperance and the suggestions of self-interest.

The Count of Siotra, whom I at first despised, and who has since, by a caprice common to my sex, become my favourite and my lover, aspired to no other glory than that of arrogating to himself the office of protector of all the debauchees at court.

The most celebrated harlots were his dearest dulcineas; without choice or distinction.

tion, this youthful Sultan, despised in his own Seraglio by the base grovelling slaves of his obscene pleasures, he threw his handkerchief at the most abandoned of these modern Laïses.

In this vortex of folly and dissipation, a fine woman or a fine horse, could secure success to those who solicited places, rewards, or honours; and, so strong was the rage, and, so general had it become, that whoever had dared to discover the smallest defect either in the Count's racer, or in his favourite mistress, he would certainly have been sent by Enitras to the Ellitsab, as a state-criminal. Yet these puerilities were almost the sole topics of discourse, and indeed the court afforded no other.

Nolliugai exercised the rod of tyranny and oppression, with a degree of severity which, at any other time, would have cost him his head; but how could the king refuse to protect this duke from the indignation of the parliament, when he had been ordered so to do by his mistress, to whom he was useful?

The Abbe Yarret pillaged the kingdom; for in all ages those posts of comptrollers

trollers have served as lures to rogues, and since the dismissal of this ecclesiastical sharper, he who has best fulfilled the duties of his station, is the man, whose honourable retreat did not give him time to feel the effects of its seducing sweets.

Yrrabud (brother to the favourite) was pandar-general, and basely sold his influence at court to all who were mean enough to solicit his protection.

The infamous Uoepuam enjoyed universal credit; nothing resisted him; and too sure of that contemptible clan of which, with indecent precipitation, he had constituted a parliament, he no longer met with any obstacles to his abominable enterprises.

Ednoc, Itnoc, Nobruob, and the peers in general, appeared, from time to time, to stand forward as the protectors of the people; but an arbitrary mandate (equivalent with what, in some countries of Europe, is denominated a *Lettre de Cachet*) issued from the private apartment of Yrrabud, who negotiated them, and received by the grovelling and detestable Count of St. Nitnerolf on his knees, made the pretended patriot return to his duty, and
after

after a short exile, kiss with all humility the hand of that base idol of courtiers.

The Marchioness of Caegnal—of whom I shall, hereafter, have occasion to speak more amply ! fluttered about, with consummate effrontery, in this new Babylon ; and that prude Ellabmal, disgusted with the effects of a marriage that had proved fatal to her repose, began, about this time, to hoist the standard of devotion.

I arrived, in the midst of this crew, enchanted at my liberation from the yoke which my tiresome mother had imposed on me, and with my heart impressed with the secret advice which, on my departure from Anneiv, I had received from my imperial brother.

An air of gaiety and assurance, eyes that invited to pleasure, and an indecent freedom of address, won the heart of grandpapa, the first moment he saw me. The Dutchess of *the day* was displeased with the preference he showed me ; and, for some time, I proved an interruption to his domestic repose. The king stupidly suffered himself to be led by the nose, and notwithstanding the vast distance between me and

and his mistress, I had pursued the line of conduct which I adopted at first, I must inevitably have fallen a victim to the insinuations and numberless sarcasms with which I attacked that miserable prostitute.

I therefore changed my battery, and the new plan I pursued was attended with astonishing success. I servilely flattered the caprice of a woman I detested, and became the cherished companion of her debaucheries, in the expectation that that happy period would soon arrive when I might reign in my turn, and exact vengeance upon her for my present degradation: this hope, too, was greatly encouraged by the dissipated life of Silvo, in whose bosom the fatal poison had already begun to operate.

At length the auspicious moment arrived. Silvo died, amidst the imprecations of his subjects, who had groaned, during the latter years of his reign, beneath the weight of his oppression. Ministerial severity was inadequate to restrain the various sarcasms* which were circula-

* The following epitaph has been distinguished among the many that were made on this occasion.

Beneath lie the ashes of Silvo—poor sot!

They say he was good—but pray, good for what?

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ted on the death of the king ; and their hopes of future happiness founded on the virtue, the candour, the goodness, and the generous resolutions of my husband, could not deter the people of Abo from indecent exclamations of joy at the loss of their monarch.

During this interval, I had founded little Caegnal, and a certain penchant which I discovered in her—a penchant in which I had indulged myself to excess, at the court of Ynamreg—made me eager to attract her notice ; the language of the eyes, half-smothered sighs, palpitation of the heart, all tended to betray the sentiments of each to the other ; an explanation ensued, and I was blessed with the possession of a person endued with every charm that could excite desire, and animated by that extreme ardour of lasciviousness which so greatly enhances the joys of gratification.

From that time we became inseparable, and our pleasures were incessant ; our intercourse however proved as prejudicial to the reputation of my lover as to the honour

nour of my husband, who first fought, by tender reproaches, to put a stop to it; but finding these ineffectual, he issued a solemn prohibition which I was compelled to obey, at least in appearance; in future therefore I could only enjoy, in secret, the animated caresses of this object of my love.

As it is my intention to notice the different epochs of my life, in which I have exhibited signal proofs of the most complete depravation, without repeating what has already been published, I now pass to the year 5771, when the court repaired to Smiehr for the anointment of my illustrious husband, whither I was invited by the alluring voice of pleasure.

The confusion occasioned by an exhausted treasury monopolized the attention of Silvo 61; mine however was directed to very different objects. I devoted my time to the purpose of ridding myself of those enemies which my pride had given birth to; and the sincere love of my husband enabled me to succeed in my endeavours.

On the eve of our departure for Smiehr, Silvo, with tears in his eyes, earnestly exhorted

horted me no longer to subject myself to those reproaches which my misconduct and levity had frequently extorted from him; I kissed him, and promised to obey him—Perfidious kiss! atrocious falshood! while the promise appeared to be dictated by truth and affection, my heart was at variance with my lips.

The poverty of the state, caused by the foolish prodigality of Silvo 51, by the dishonesty of his ministers, and by the criminal arts of Stock-jobbing, ought to have prevented all superfluous pomp at this solemn festival; this consideration, however, did not deter me from incurring every expence that could flatter my vanity; nor were the serious remonstrances of my husband, on this article, in the least attended to. My equipages were superb, and my dress was magnificent; but in order to defray these expences, I was compelled to have recourse to usurious practices.

It was thus I degraded the dignity of the throne, and began to dishonour myself in the eyes of the people, by entering into a league with their tyrants, who by their dishonest complacency, obtained from me

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the privilege of extending their destructive machinations.'

When I had discovered this secret means of defeating what I denominated the avarice of my husband, but which was, in fact, only the effect of a prudent foresight, and a necessary attention to the state of the kingdom, I ceased to alarm myself on account of those *privations*, the approach of which I foresaw; and my court, which was totally separated from that of the king, became the pantheon of pleasures of every kind. Tiresome old age was excluded, and none but sprightly youths and women of gallantry were admitted; I issued an irrevocable proscription against the ridiculous prejudices of prudence, and rather regarded myself as *Venus* in the midst of her votaries, than as the august queen of an amiable people. My husband, seeking for a relaxation from the pains of royalty, in the occupation of a *locksmith*, had frequently induced me to take the indecent liberty of treating him as *Vulcan*. Determined to resemble, in all points, the unchaste deity of whom that fabulous God was the husband, I resolved to chuse for myself an *Adonis*, and the young and charming duke of Yngioc was the happy mortal

tal whom I associated with the king of Abo.

Such was the state of my heart, and such the delicacy of my sentiments, when we repaired to Smiehr. Hitherto I had been studious to involve my conduct and my amours in a sort of mystery; I had been afraid to render them public. At Selliasrev, I eluded the prying curiosity of court parasites, and retired to the most secret recesses, in order to enjoy my pleasures and to complete the violation of my nuptial vow. But I soon begun to consider such restraint as beneath me; I blushed at the degradation to which I had so long submitted; and at Smiehr, I hoisted the standard of licentiousness the most unbridled.

The enchanting walk near the new gate of that city afforded me an opportunity of gratifying my luxuriant desires; the island of Love, by which it is terminated on the side of the river, really appeared to me to be the favoured residence of that enchanting deity, and I accordingly determined to make a suitable sacrifice at his shrine.

This guilty project, executed almost as
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soon

soon as conceived, took place on the ninth of June 5771, after a splendid supper which I gave, in the walk, and which the king, who was fatigued with the ceremonies of the day, would not honour with his company. All those whose presence I most dreaded, remained with his majesty, and every thing conspired to favour my wishes and my views.

I banished all kind of etiquette for the night, which I was determined to render delicious. I drank tolerably well—that is to say, like a good and royal Namreg:—heated with wine, I ran from bower to bower not unlike a Bacchant; every one followed my example, and, at a signal from me, the confidants of my private intentions extinguished all the lights. The attendants were dismissed; liberty presided at our festivals, and we imitated the priestesses of Bacchus and Venus, when united.

None but myself could trace the horrors of this night without a blush. But is it the first time that I have overcome scruples? I have promised to conceal nothing; the opinion which may be entertained of my candour is of little consequence to me,
since

since I have forfeited all claims to public esteem:

After wandering about for a few minutes, I felt myself closely embraced, and being resolved to let no opportunity escape, I yielded to the stranger's caresses, and in order to favour them, sunk gently down upon the turf.

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He conducted himself like a Hercules, and almost made me forswear the repetition of those intoxicating pleasures which I enjoyed with that lovely woman Caegnal.

I have never yet learnt to whom I was indebted for two of the happiest hours I ever yet passed; the name of my hero is yet unknown to me; but in the midst of the troubles by which I am surrounded, I think with rapture of that delicious night, and the agreeable recollection brings on the most extatic reflections.

On my return, I received a tedious and tiresome lecture from my husband; he did not, however, suspect my virtue, though had he performed those duties which some husbands never omit, he would

have found the most infallible proofs of my infidelity. The worst part of the lecture was the prohibition ever more to visit that spot which had afforded me such inexpressible delight. After this I became disgusted with the place; in vain did I attend the pompous ceremony of the anointment; while my body was at the Cathedral of Smiehr, my heart and mind were more pleasantly employed in the delightful bowers of the island of Love.

Although I was but little interested in what concerned the king, still I was disgusted with the ecclesiastical pride that was displayed on this occasion; the repeated genuflexions which those sacred depositaries of the holy oil exacted from my husband, appeared to me mean, humiliating, and degrading to majesty. Their grimaces and ridiculous attitudes made me laugh till the tears started from my eyes. I intercepted a look of indignation from the fat prior of Saint-Imer; but that did not make me give my opinion that this absurd farce degraded the king of Abo, and that the abolition of it ought to be one of the first acts of the legislative power.

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The court returned to Sirap, and the season proved delightful. I foresaw the advantages to be derived from our residence at the metropolis with regard to the gratification of those desires, which, from the warmth of my constitution, I incessantly experienced; my dear brother-in-law, the Count of Siotra, assiduously paid his court to me, without, however, explaining the nature of those sentiments with which I had inspired him.

About this time Reisnetnom, directress of the theatre at Selliasrev, having contracted debts to an enormous amount, conceived a plan of a fraudulent bankruptcy. I liked this woman, who made herself subservient to my caprice, and therefore extricated her from her difficulties, by paying her debts.

The theatre amused, me because the actors took the trouble of exhibiting the works of our most obscene dramatists; I went regularly every night with my brother-in-law, till the king, displeased at my continual absence, played me a trick which for some time exposed me to the laughter and ridicule of the whole court.

I was

I was returning, according to custom, from one of these luscious representations, in an immodest undress, escorted by my gallant brother-in-law, who acted as my coachman, when, on my arrival at the palace-gate, the centinel refused me admission. I immediately made myself known, in a tone of authority calculated to enforce obedience; but the only answer I could obtain was, "The king himself gave me his order, and expressly forbade me to let *any one* pass!" In vain I threatened, in vain did I entreat! neither menace nor solicitations were sufficient to procure me admission. The count swore with all that energy that is peculiar to him, but his imprecations were disregarded. I was obliged to return to the theatre, (with the companion of my disgrace) from the gallery of which, that leads to the palace, I reached my own apartment; where, to crown the whole, I found neither candle nor attendant, and was compelled to get a light from the guard-room to light me to bed. A thousand projects of revenge entered my head; but that which I adopted was to continue my present course of life. This idea, which at once gratified my senses and my wounded vanity, gave me infinite

nite pleasure; and I fell asleep with the determination of suffering no opportunity to escape which could favour the execution of my plan.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

*New Amours—Clandestine Excursions—
Singular Wager.*

THAT profound dissimulation—the result of reflection—which has ever been the predominant feature of my mind, ought naturally to have engaged me to adhere to my project of revenge, without attempting to reproach my husband with his conduct. There were many considerations which should have superinduced the adoption of this line of conduct, but the ascendancy which, in several instances, I had acquired over the mind of the king, made me anticipate him, in the just complaints he was entitled to make; and according to my usual custom, bidding defiance to etiquette, I made my appearance at his levee.

With my eyes swollen, more from the fatigues of the night, than from crying, I loudly complained of the improper orders
given.

given to the centinel at the gates of the palace, and asked my husband, somewhat abruptly, whether I was to have the only alternative of being a prisoner in my own palace, or of being exposed to the inconvenience of keeping the hours prescribed to me without consulting my own inclination or pleasure. The king smiled disdainfully at a question which he deemed disrespectful, and answered me, with the air and tone of a downright cit, that he was master of his own house, and should insist upon no one sitting up in it after he was in bed himself. I attempted to reply, but he immediately turned his back upon me; and this was all the advantage I derived from my imprudent confidence in my own power.

The storm blew over; but being no longer able to pursue my nocturnal excursions, I determined to cast my eyes on my brother-in-law, the dear Count of Siotra, who, having been the companion of my disgrace, desired nothing better than to become an accomplice in my revenge.

I must, nevertheless, acknowledge, that my advances to the youthful count, rather proceeded from a spirit of hatred and coquetry,

quetry, than from inclination. I abominated his wife, and thought that I could not give her a more convincible proof of my aversion, than by seducing her husband, who never treated her worse than when he had been engaged in intrigues that had led him to violate his conjugal fidelity.

I likewise acknowledge that my hatred was equally divided between her and Damade ; that I experienced a singular pleasure in humiliating them both ; that I detested Rusinom ; but that, notwithstanding my antipathy to him, had I known him to be a *woman's man*, I should have tried every means of seducing him, and by triumphing in his defect, have gratified my resentment.

Being deprived of this resource, I made use of others ; but the occupation they furnished me with did not lead me to forego the desire of being at once the sister-in-law and the mistress of Siotra. Some significant looks on my part soon explained my intentions to him ; they spoke a language which such an expert libertine as he was could not possibly mistake.

The different trips I had taken to Cythera

thera with different persons, would have almost deterred me from returning thither but for this new acquaintance. The transports of those lovers whom I had hitherto enjoyed, were enfeebled by respect. With them, it was in vain I laid aside every appearance of Majesty, chose the most retired spots, exposed myself to their sight in a state of pure nature, provoked their embraces by the most expressive caresses, the most lascivious postures, and the most impassioned looks;—it was in vain, in short, that I gave way to that delirum and intoxication which the violent heat of my constitution produced. The idea of encircling their queen in their arms, made them cold as ice; I could get nothing, or at least but very little, from them. It was not till after I had exhausted all the wanton resources of the most celebrated courtezans, that I extorted a slender and unsatisfactory tribute; yet I had always chosen my lovers like a perfect mistress of the art, and the names of Yngioc, Nolid and Liuerduay, will sufficiently demonstrate that I had little reason to expect such impotent exertions from beings so robust in appearance.

Siotra, less apprehensive of danger from the connection, afforded me more complete

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satisfaction,

fatisfaction. It was a long time since I had practised those different *positions* which lead by degrees, to the summit of voluptuousness; notwithstanding therefore my extensive knowledge of the subject, I was obliged, in my interviews with the count, to begin my noviciate afresh, and the new discoveries I made, compelled me to acknowledge my want of experience.

An officer, at the court of Anneiv, had first initiated me in the mysteries of Love, when the verdure that surrounds the temple of that deity was scarcely perceptible; he too had begun to instruct me in those delightful gradations which constitute the ne plus ultra of amorous knowledge; but how far was I from having attained to perfection! That perfection however I now acquired in the arms of my new admirer, and the multiplicity of those exquisite pleasures which he made me experience, encreased my attachment to him, even to madness.

I shall say but little of the birth of my children. It was an event which Abo celebrated with festivals; the vulgar were profuse of their congratulations to my husband, but the clear-sighted knew what
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to think of it. The king received, with complacency, the numerous addresses on this subject, while, from time to time, the wits exercised their talents, and gave rise to the most bitter sarcasms. Many of these came to my ears, and convinced me that Siotra was generally supposed to be the father of my children. I paid little attention however to the voice or opinion of the public, and never suffered either to give me the smallest uneasiness; the only regret, indeed, which I have is, that I did not supply more abundant matter for the vast quantity of epigrams which the mob assailed me with, at this period.

In order to keep Siotra perpetually chained to my car, I profited by his precious lessons to such a degree as even to surpass him in his own art: his natural inconstancy, however, was not to be restrained, by my incessant study to promote the gratification of his desires; he did not forsake me indeed, but he neglected me; and that I might not lose him, entirely, I was obliged not only to allow him the enjoyment of new pleasures, but even to appear to favour it.

The young noblemen about court, at
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the head of whom were my dear count, and the duke of Sertrahc, now duke of Snaelro, had collected, in their different travels, a great number of foreign vices, and follies; the customs, manners, fashions and pleasures of Dnalgne had seduced them so far, that, in a short time, every thing was Hsilgne throughout the kingdom—the king and his stupid brother Reuisnom only excepted.

Horse-racing was introduced, and daily drew the people from their labour and domestic occupations; on the vigour and intrepidity of the jockeys, the alteration of fortunes depended, and the two princes of the blood derived more glory from these ruinous matches, than from their famous exploits at Ratlarbig and Tnahsu.

I was the soul of these amusements, which favoured mine; as soon as the race was over, I flew with the velocity of a star, to Nonairt, where I was soon joined by my dear count, to whose caresses I submitted myself, and with whom I enjoyed the sports of Venus, heightened by a variation of postures, and by every amorous incitement which our heated imaginations could suggest.

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But wherever he be, let him not imagine that he *monopolized* my person, at this period. With him, indeed, I enjoyed the *solidity* of pleasure, but I seasoned it with the enjoyment of others. Miss Tavrod, one of my attendants, after gaining my confidence by her merit, had fixed my attention by her beauty. The brilliancy of her eyes, and the delicate whiteness of her bosom, excited my desires; the impulse soon became irresistible, and I determined to gratify it. The mode I adopted is too curious to be omitted. As she was one day attending me in my closet, I observed a mole on her right cheek, and immediately remarked that she must consequently have another mole beneath her right breast. It was in vain she assured she had not, I persisted in my assertion, and declared that nothing less than ocular demonstration could convince me that I was wrong. —I therefore desired she would pull off her stays, which she did with a blush, and discovered to my enraptured sight the most lovely pair of snowy orbs that woman was ever blessed with—their firmness bespoke their purity; I moulded them with my hands—sucked their rosy nipples—and, in short, acted the part of an impassioned lover. I soon perceived I had communicated

some sparks of the fire which raged within my own bosom, into that of this sweet girl.

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Never was woman better formed for amorous disport; and never did any one sacrifice to Venus with greater zeal and ardour than this sweet girl.

It was in this manner, that, varying the frolics of love, to the enjoyment of which my constitution continually invited me, I prevented them from becoming insipid, and incessantly exerted the privilege accorded me by nature, of being equally sensible to the caresses of either sex.

At the mere sight of a handsome man, or a beautiful woman, my eyes sparkled, my face glowed, and the most pointed expression was visible in every feature. I could scarcely conceal the violence of my passions, and not one of the objects of my lasciviousness ever escaped the snares which I spread in order to render them favourable to my wishes.

That I might the more effectually conceal my amorous adventures from the eyes

eyes of those who were interested in exposing me, I had frequent indispositions at command; I then feigned a wish to be left alone, by which means I gained an opportunity of repairing to the different temples of love, which I had in my power, to meditate on the mysteries of that deity.

My dear Siotra was not jealous; no!—very far from it; but one day when he was in an ill humour he took the liberty of calling me to account for those clandestine practices, with the particulars of which he was unacquainted. The connections between us, and some other trifles of a similar nature, had taught me the absurdity of blushing. — I did not hesitate, therefore, in making him acquainted with my passion for the beautiful Tavrod, exhorting him, at the same time, not to be alarmed at it. My candour by no means displeased him; he only appeared to doubt the possibility of this familiar intercourse, and asked me ironically how I could possibly *interest* any other woman.

“ I am going to astonish you, my dear count,” said I; and here I actually told him

him the whole of my proceedings with Tavrod, after quitting his embraces.

“ Nothing,” replied the count, “ but ocular demonstration can convince me of the truth of what you say; yes, my dear sister, you astonish, but do not convince me: nay, I’ll go still farther; I’ll bett you a thousand guineas that the thing is not possible!” “ A thousand guineas! I accept the wager, count; and if you chuse, we’ll decide it without farther delay.”

Having retired to a private apartment, voluptuously furnished, the count, who knew he could not avoid *half* losing the wager, manfully endeavoured to prevent any further inclination in me of a similar tendency, for the present at least. But as soon as I found myself at liberty, I rang the bell, and Tavrod, who was in waiting, made her appearance. The moment she entered the room, I took her in my arms—the count being present—and kissed her with rapture. She blushed at first; but inspirited by my advances, the idea of shame vanished, and she even exceeded me in a desire of *showing* the astonished count that his thousand guineas were in a perilous situation.

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My lover was now convinced of the danger of setting me at defiance, and acknowledging he had lost his wager, declared he would willingly pay as much every day, to be present at such a delightful scene.

I had afterwards reason to suspect that the voluptuous transports of Tavrod, had made a deep impression on the heart of my lover. And upon examining with the precision of an accoucheur, I found my suspicions confirmed—I willingly, however, forgive the count for this instance of infidelity—the amnesty should be reciprocal.

CHAP.

IV

CHAP. VI.

*Low Intrigues—New instances of Iniquity—
A treacherous Minister—A Dignified Priest
appears upon the Stage.*

HITHERTO I have only presented to the reader the portrait of a wretched prostitute, polluting the royal bed with the vilest debauchery. The dreadful state of libertinism into which I was plunged—the glaring infamy of my conduct, made all Abo tremble; contempt, however, was the prevailing sentiment I inspired. Tired with the composition of songs and remonstrances, the loungers and sages of the court now regarded me as, a lost woman, corrupted, abandoned, and distinguished by every mark of reprobation.

In order to rouse the people from this lethargic indolence, it was necessary to give

give a full scope to the native ferocity of my disposition; which I accordingly did. Not contented with being an object of disdain to the inhabitants of Abo, I determined to become an object of fear, and to make horror and hatred succeeded to contempt.

The advice—dictated by ambition—which my brother had given me on my departure from Anneiv, was very fresh in my mind. Nothing but opportunity had hitherto been wanting for reducing it to practice; but in order to ensure success, the countenance of the ministry was indispensably requisite, and unfortunately I was not able to procure it.

My brother's disposition, in every point conformable to my own, daily involved him in fresh difficulties, from which gold alone could extricate him; but his treasury was exhausted, and his subjects groaning under the weight of oppression, appeared disposed to shake off his tyrannical yoke. I loved him too sincerely not to afford him all the assistance in my power Yloj ed Yrulf, though refractory at first, had at length yielded to my wishes, by consenting to second my fraternal intentions;

tions; and during his administration I remitted many considerable sums to my brother.

The disgrace of this minister alarmed me, and I exerted all my influence to procure him a successor that was entirely devoted to my will; but I had the mortification to be disappointed in my hopes. Nossémro was intractable; and, for some time, I was deprived of the ability to assist the person I most esteemed. Willingly would I have sent him all the treasures of Abo! such were then my most ardent wishes; but how could I hope to see them accomplished so long as the members of administration were in direct opposition to me?

I consider the first part of my life— notwithstanding its truth—but as a mere collection of facts which were generally known; I shall not, however, enlarge upon that passage which relates to Rakcen, and to the strange manœuvres I employed for promoting his disgrace: at this time he was very far from monopolizing the confidence of his sovereign; but could I have foreseen the revolutions which have since occurred, or had not I been restrained by a
stupid

stupid timidity, the projects I formed would have been put in execution, and that minister whose probity I detested, must inevitably have been ruined.

Ennolac now made his appearance in the political horizon of Abo; and revived all my hopes. I had long wished to see placed at the head of the treasury one of those public leeches whose soul, insensible to the cries of grief, delights in scenes of misery; and my wish was now fulfilled.

The most absurd speculations, the most insidious projects, the most criminal advice to the king, and the most unprincipled plunder, were the chief means which this minister—to whom I am under so many obligations—employed for the purpose of insinuating himself into my good graces. I received him with kindness, applauded his administration, and soothed his vanity—in short, I exerted the meanest arts of seduction to attach him to me, and I succeeded in the attempt. I never indeed doubted the success of my undertaking, for I always attacked to advantage, the contemptible creatures I wished to subdue; the arms I made use of were coquetry and

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dissemi-

disimulation, which I preferred to the shield of wisdom or the palladium of virtue.

I have but a small space of time to describe from that moment to the present; but every instant of this interval has been devoted to libertinism, ambition, plunder and sacrilege. Each new day has given birth to new horrors, and in those hours of the night which were neither destined to pleasure or sleep, I examined my own mind, and finding it exclusively inhabited by vice, returned, the next day, to a repetition of infamy.

During the embassy of the Lanidrac Ecnirp of Nahor at the court of Anneiv I attracted his attention, and inspired him with love. Bold as the declaration of his passion appeared to me, I still gave him reason to hope, not by one of those decisive answers which remove all doubt, but by an obliging smile, by those vague and obliging expressions which are so well understood in the schools of gallantry.

I was always fond of conducting amours in the stile of a grenadier, who abridges preliminaries and hastens to the conclusion.

sion. The honied and sentimental tone of the Lanidrac made some impression on me ; but the figure and insinuating address of a Namreg officer proved infinitely more persuasive. I would mention the name of this Adonis (who first initiated me into the mysteries of Venus) and expatiate on his skill and vigour, if I was not afraid to expose a life which will be ever dear to me.

Enraged at the preference I showed to his rival, the Lanidrac, determined to exact vengeance for what he deemed an insult to his superior merit ; this project he has since executed ; thus, although I have admitted him to the most familiar intercourse with me—the particulars of which I shall hereafter notice—I have ever regarded him as my most inveterate enemy ; and I advise him not to think himself indebted to me for having escaped the scaffold, but to thank his good stars which alone preserved him from falling a victim to a plan that was formed with every possible precaution.

It is needless to repeat that I possessed the deepest dissimulation, since every circumstance of my life bears the strongest

marks of it—but no one felt its effects more sensibly than this political prelate. I pretended to be wholly ignorant of the licentious stories which he propagated concerning me at the court of Anneiv ; I held out my hand to him, with the utmost affability, at Enrevas, and I received him with kindness at Selliasrev, even when I had much greater reason to be offended with him.

That etiquette which had disgusted me so much in Ynamreg, appeared less terrible at the court of Abo. It is well known what advantage I took of the kind of liberty which is there accorded to women of my rank. I have already said, that, at first, I rejected with disdain the amorous suit of my brother-in-law, the count of Siotra ; yet, still his attention to me excited a clamour, which soon came to the ears of my mother, who thinking there was nobody better able to inform her of the truth of the report than the Lanidrac, wrote to him for that purpose. This prelate was still fond of me. He was greatly embarrassed at my *connection* with the count, which was then ascribed to me, though it was not realized till some time after. Alarmed at the success of a rival,

with

with whom, notwithstanding his vanity, he was obliged to confess his inability to cope, rage took possession of his breast; he answered my mother, by the following letter, which was found among her papers by my brother, who sent it to me.

To the Empress Queen of all the Sciragnah.

Madam,

My respect and zeal for the illustrious house of Airtsua, the veneration with which your virtues have inspired me; the candour which you witnessed in me when the king sent me to make known his sentiments to you, and to which you now appeal, all urge me to comply with your request, though that compliance must give me pain. Why did you not fix on some other person for this disagreeable office?

It is but too true that Antonina, when she entered on the territories of Abo, totally forgot those lessons of prudence which you had endeavoured to impress on her mind; independent of her excessive taste for every species of luxury, her coquetry is unbounded. It is reported that she prefers her brother-in-law to her husband; I sincerely wish it may not be true, but I

am compelled to acknowledge that appearances are against her.

• This is all the information I am able to give you. May your majesty's wise exhortations bring her back to the path of duty! may my zeal conspire to the promotion of so glorious an end!—I remain &c. &c.

L. Ed. Nahor.

It is plain from this letter that the Lannidrac did not spare me, and that if he meant, by this means, to prove the force of his passion, he was grossly deceived; for the moment I was acquainted with his atrocity, I vowed an eternal hatred against him. It was this very hatred which induced me, in the sequel, to place him on the list of my favourites; he was then however far from suspecting that I was only presenting him with poison in a golden goblet, and only honouring him [with my favour with the view to accelerate his destruction.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

New Amours—Indecent but political Connection with the Lanidrac—Favours granted to the Countess ed al Ettom—Explanation of the strange Suit commenced against her.

I Am compelled to acknowledge that I am at a loss to decide what sentiment predominates in my breast as I take up my pen to write this chapter. Loud as the voice of indignation must inevitably be, the dread of it shall not induce me to conceal or disguise a single fact.

I began to be tired of the caresses of my brother-in-law; variety was necessary to render my pleasures palatable, and my ambition had long been flattered with the prospect of enjoying a new object. The handsome Ennesref, colonel of the royal Sedews, followed me wherever I went; and being stricken with the beauty of his figure,

gure, I determined not to let him sigh in vain. As he was walking one day in the orangery, his eyes met mine, and an intelligent signal which I gave him, soon convinced him of the happiness that was in store for him. On my return to the palace, I sent him a box, by one of my pages, with the following note inclosed in it.

Flora to Zephyr.

For some time, my dear Zephyr, I have seen you traversing the parterres of my empire, and observing with attention all the flowers which are under my domination. If you have fixed your wishes on any one of them, your Flora will die of despair. Remember that I am their *queen*, and that I should inflict the most rigorous punishment on her who should dare to deprive me of that treasure which I am anxious to possess. I shall go to night, at nine o'clock, to the *Atte Nonairt*; if Zephyr pays any regard to the tender anxiety of Flora, he will not fail to meet her there. The governor will introduce him.

Ennesref did not make me wait for his answer, which he returned by the bearer.

Zephyr

Zephyr to Flora.

Zephyr regards all the flowers of your empire with perfect indifference; if he observes them with attention, it is only in the hope of discovering their queen among them; when he sees her, respect keeps him silent, and his eyes are the only interpreters of his heart. Conducted by gratitude and love, he will repair to Nonairt this evening at nine; too happy if the ardour of his passion can chase every sentiment of uneasiness from the bosom of Flora, and convince her of his sincerity.

This note, with its answer, suffices to show, that I lost no time in the attainment of my wishes, and that the handkerchief was no sooner thrown, than the favour was granted.

Punctual to his appointment, Ennesref was introduced to me by Nizab, (the confident of my secret pleasures, and governor of Nonairt) who was waiting for his approach. It is needless to describe the particulars of our interview; the public is sufficiently acquainted with the ardour with which I celebrated the mysteries of love,
and

and extracted all its quintessence. I shall content myself with observing that, happy and contented with each other, we passed two hours together, and experienced all the effects of a passion the most ardent and animated.

After that, we met continually at the same place, and our connection lasted till I became cloyed with the possession of my lover, and began to think of giving him a successor.

I have before observed—and have given the most convincing proofs of the truth of my observations—that I was extremely inconstant in my attachments. A great share of address, of science and of *singularity*, was requisite to fix me; when I met with none of these qualities in the persons whom I honoured with my caresses, I soon became disgusted, and left them for others.

In the long list which I could produce of my male and female lovers, if I followed the chronological order, I could prove that I was no sooner disgusted with the commerce of women, than I had recourse to that of men. There was scarcely a female about court, who had adopted a
taste

taste for her own sex, but I had enjoyed. The frequent visits of the insipid Nussod soon tired me; besides I was afraid of her, I knew that beneath an appearance of meekness she concealed a jealous and a mischievous mind; in short, she was a dangerous companion, and I had already experienced the bad effects of her indiscretion. On whom then could I fix my eyes as a successor to the colonel?

I could easily have renewed my lease with the dutchess of Cangilop; but my passion for her was past: besides, on my first connection with her, I found nothing but deformity, where I fully expected to discover hidden beauties; and I should never have admitted her a second time to my arms, but for the particular circumstance which rendered her assistance necessary to me.

Another consideration induces me to sooth her; she had acquired the most absolute ascendancy over me; she was mistress of my principal secrets, and had in her possession a number of notes and letters of mine; a thousand assignations, imprudently addressed as well to the count of Siotra as to other men of rank, and still
more

more imprudently entrusted to faithless hands; besides several memorials, the margins of which contained various proofs of my unheard of exactions, of sums received for places sold, and other proceedings of a similar nature.

I was in this state of uncertainty, at a loss how to act, when the countess Ed Siolav ed al Ettom was introduced to me by Yresim, the first lady of my chamber. This unfortunate person—who became the victim of my rage against the Lanidrac—came to solicit the restitution of the estate of Etetnof, which had formerly been in the possession of her illustrious ancestors.

I think I have before observed, that when I saw a person that struck my fancy, his (or *her*) situation in life was never an object of consideration with me. Thus the countess made a complete conquest of my heart the very first time she threw herself at my feet. “This is as it should be,” said I to myself; “my anxiety is now at an end; *she* shall be the successor of Ennesref.”

I pretended to grant her request, but the fact is, that as I designed her for my own private pleasures, I did not wish she should be indebted for her fortune to any
one

one but herself; I therefore neglected to exert my influence over Ennolac in order to procure an augmentation of her pension, which was not more than seventy pounds, in the hope that the mediocrity of her circumstances would prove favourable to my views, and infallibly conduct her from my presence-chamber to my bed.

Thus I snatched this prey from the fangs of the luxurious comptroller, who made a free use of the royal treasures, that he might open hearts with a golden key. I was no stranger to his proceedings, but as he enabled me to pursue the same method, prudence kept me silent.

The impassioned Lanidrac, not having renounced his libidinous projects, watched all my motions and even my looks. He soon therefore perceived the impression which the charms of the countess had made upon me; and finding means to attach her to his interest, he gave her every necessary instruction, and made her promise to submit herself to my desires.

Our second interview took place at No-
nairt between eleven and twelve at night.

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The

The countess was introduced to my chamber by that same Tavrod of whom I have spoken before, who, from being a principal actress in all these libidinous scenes, now contented herself with the title of *agent*.

Heavens! what delights did I experience during that charming night! with what complacency did the artful countess submit to all my whims and caprices! what transports! what intoxication! I thought Olympus was open before me, and myself in possession of its most blissful seat, for surely my raptures were more than mortal!

I dismissed the countess with assurances of protection, and a present of four hundred pounds in bank notes, with which Ennolac supplied me in abundance. I paid her like a queen, while the comptroller paid *his* mistress (Nurbel) like a king, and by the same means too.

The Lanidrac, being informed of the particulars of this interview, set all his engines to work; he even dared to write to me. I refused, for some time, to listen to his justification; but the secret advices I received from my brother, who had

had long been anxious to see him at the head of affairs, at length induced me to submit to the reconciliation he solicited.

The Memoirs published, at Nodnol, in 9871, by the countess, in justification of her own conduct, and which are strictly true, will make the reader fully acquainted with the farce which I caused to be played between the Lanidrac and Avilo, a common prostitute; in this manner did I associate myself with the vilest of beings whenever I could render them useful.

My forgiveness of the Lanidrac was far from sincere; indeed it was only granted (*in appearance*) with a view to allure him, with greater certainty, into those snares which I was gradually preparing for him; hence my correspondence with him became an enigma difficult of solution.

For this purpose, I humoured him in every thing, and suffered him to act the *Pastor Fido* about my person. My only design was to convert him into a mere machine; to make him commit as many absurdities as I could; to undeceive my brother, and engage him to withdraw his confidence from so unworthy an object,

and then to crown my vengeance by his final destruction.

To render this enterprize successful was the constant object of my reflections, and frequently, when sitting with the Lani-drac I appeared lost in thought, and made no answer to his insinuating protestations of love. The artful prelate, however, one day, took advantage of my lethargy, and interpreting silence as a sure mark of consent, seized me in his arms, threw me on a couch, and finding me still in a reverie, proceeded to the last extremity, without meeting with the *least* interruption.

I had now enjoyed men of almost every profession; the army, the church and the court, had alternately supplied me with lovers. Nay, such was the warmth of my constitution, that had I found among the peasantry an object worthy of my notice, the immense distance between us would have proved no obstacle to the gratification of my desires.

The Cangilops became furious; my attachment to them daily diminished; they no longer enjoyed my full confidence; I often treated them with affected disdain,
and

and appearing to have renounced all thoughts of love, interest occupied the first place in my mind.

The indiscretion of *the Slave*,* however, who sometimes assumed the tone of a *master*, alarmed me: Nufual Gruobmexul, and Siotra, talked publicly of our connection. Some indiscreet sallies of his own, too, relating to certain *peculiarities* in my secret charms, had convinced, beyond the possibility of doubt, those who were as wise as himself, of the reality of our intercourse.

At this time occurred the adventure of the necklace—of that necklace which has fixed the attention of distant climes, and the whole mystery attending which has not yet been explained; the account I am going to give of it will make me many new enemies; but no matter, I have promised to be candid, and candid I will be.

I had long been soliciting the king, to make me a present of a pair of diamond bracelets, similiar to those which were worn

* An appellation assumed by the Lanidrac to shew his devotion to the queen.

by the queen of a neighbouring isle; but as a compliance with my request would have interfered with his projects of œconomy, he refused to grant it. Ennolac was at a loss for means to procure fresh supplies, every pecuniary resource was exhausted; and intrigue appeared to be the only method by which I could procure this trinket, which I was so anxious to obtain.

I had frequently mentioned my wishes, and my husband's avarice, to the countess; she repeated what I said to the Lanidrac, who, notwithstanding the distressed situation of his affairs, and the bad state of his credit, undertook to negociate the business, by which I was the only gainer, having always taken the necessary precaution of employing my accomplices and never appearing in it myself.

The sequel of this affair led me imperceptibly to the completion of that vengeance which I had been meditating against the Lanidrac; but it was not so perfect as I wished it to be.

The necklace was, at last, brought me, by my secret messenger, Xualcse'l; and the first moment I had it in my possession, I
vowed

vowed it should serve me as an instrument of revenge; it was not my intention to include the countess in this proscription; circumstances alone influenced the event, which will no longer appear incomprehensible after the publication of these memoirs.

It was necessary that the necklace should be *unset*, that I might be enabled to adapt the diamonds it contained to the purpose for which they were destined. This was soon accomplished, some of them I distributed to my favourites, and as they were valuable they entertained a higher opinion of my generosity. It was these presents that brought the unhappy countess to the *post* of infamy, and caused her to be *branded* by the hand of the executioner.

The most profound policy was requisite to extricate me from this delicate situation, all the infamy of which, had I been discovered, must infallibly have fallen upon me. I had recourse to my usual maxims—I sacrificed innocence to the preservation of a slender portion of expiring honour—and exerted my utmost skill to cover this atrocious proceeding with the most impenetrable veil.

The

The most trivial communication with any one on this article, must have proved highly prejudicial to me; for which reason I kept myself entirely on the reserve; and in spite of the hypocritical baron ed Liuterb's pretended zeal, his insidious interrogations, and his air of assurance, I firmly denied that the trinket in question had ever been in my possession, affirming that I had no more knowledge of that than I had of the countess, whose ruin I thus promoted by a criminal disavowal.

By this means did I get rid of an affair, the whole infamy of which I deserved to incur; and the name of *my Majesty* was never mentioned but as a fresh subject of accusation against those who had dared to call its purity in question. Still however I was upon thorns; I had been accused by the witnesses; and the cunning Sennegrev, having calculated how far I might be interested in this abominable manœuvre, had guessed with sufficient precision to justify his hatred, and to induce him to furnish indirect proofs against me.

Sentence was pronounced; all the laws of equity were violated, innocence was oppressed, and the Lanidrac escaped any
 vengeance;

vengeance; while I remained in security, and in quiet possession of three hundred and fifty six brilliants, belonging to the necklace I had so artfully acquired, of which I hope one day to compose a pair of bracelets the same as those of my royal neighbour.

CHAP.

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C H A P. ~~VII.~~

*Renewal of Intrigues—The commencement of
Anarchy.*

I Now deemed it prudent to renew my connection with the duchess of Cangilop; the indiscreet communications of the Lanidrac had made me tremble, lest all my past conduct should become known to the world. I had therefore broken off all intercourse with my imprudent lovers; but still my desires required gratification, and the duchess was able to afford it. So I attached myself to her with a resolution to profit by any other opportunity that might afterwards present itself.

Our reconciliation supplied ample food for scandal, and I was represented by the whole court as having the most ungovernable passion for my own sex; but public
opinion

opinion was to me of little consequence; to follow my inclinations and gratify my desires was a privilege which no consideration could induce me to forego.

My brother still encouraged the hope of fomenting divisions in the kingdom of Abo, and he communicated his projects to me, which I seconded as well as I could, though it was not in my power to carry them into execution. All my actions were observed with an eye of distrust, and notwithstanding the intrigues of those who were blindly devoted to my will, I saw no reason to hope that his schemes would be crowned with success.

Cangilop, then, became my favourite and the soul of my pleasures; profiting by all the moments which Silvo left us at liberty to enjoy, we punished him for his indolence by the most lascivious intercourse, which we did not even take the trouble to conceal. Siotra was sometimes admitted to our orgies, but I dreaded his approach, for his share in these *mysteries* was so great, that, but for a precaution which I had learned from Cangilop, the royal family must have experienced a considerable augmentation.

The

The hopes which the people of Abbe entertained of a reformation in the general administration of affairs, made them return quietly to their usual occupations, and the fresh materials I furnished them with, gave birth to numerous satirical publications, some of which were addressed immediately to me. This only served to augment my rage against the nation, and to prepare me for the execution of any thing that might accelerate its ruin.

The means indeed of effecting this, were not difficult to find; the ministry had long been laying the train, and nothing but an opportunity was wanting to set fire to it. My husband, in the mean time, remained in a state of tranquillity, being perfectly satisfied with the assurances of melioration that were daily made him; this crisis enabled me to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the national character than I had hitherto obtained.

The princes of the blood, of the house of Nobruob, had exhibited frequent proofs of a patriotic disposition, and a love of the people; but I considered them as so many weathercocks, to be turned by the slightest breath of wind. Nothing was so
easy

easy to me as to govern their ideas, and make them subservient to my own purposes.

During this time I suffered a great deal from the impetuous, fiery, and jealous disposition of the dutchess Cangilop, which I frequently found insupportable. I was now divided between the desire of gratifying my secret inclinations, by finding out some method of supplying my brother with the immense sums of which he stood in the utmost need, and that of gaining over the princes of the blood, and some others, by flattering their ambition.

My dear Siotra, exempt from all sentiments of jealousy, continued to pay me the greatest attention; having studied his heart and learned his secrets, it was in vain for him to dissemble with me; I knew that my husband was equally an object of detestation to him as to me, and it was a master-stroke of policy on my part to receive him as an associate in all my manœuvres.

I already foresaw the execution of our projects, and the bare thoughts of it always raised a smile of satisfaction on my countenance.

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tenance. Still actuated by political motives, I humoured the turbulent dutchefs, whose intimacy with those whom I wanted to assist me, sufficiently pointed out the danger I should incur by offending her.

Siotra, of whom I am still deeply enamoured, although he is, in a manner, lost to me, assisted me in the formation of that league, the pernicious effects of which have been recently felt. The success of it, I ascribed to him, while I carefully concealed my intention of making him a tool to my brother. Our confederacy was speedily settled; but the intervention of unforeseen occurrences compelled us to defer to some future opportunity the execution of our plan.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

*Recourse had to the Parliament—The Count's
Effrontery—Ruisnom's Stupidity.*

OUR projects were not yet animated with that spirit of desperation which we have since exhibited; at this time we were reasoning on the means of putting our plan in execution, but the parliament, by a resistance we little expected, rendered the commencement of our undertaking abortive.

The most stupid of edicts had been issued by Silvo, and we had every reason to hope that the circumstance of registering it would render him odious to the nation. Our hopes however were disappointed by the conduct of the parliament. This political corps—already foreseeing that it must soon incur the public indignation—absolutely refused to enregister the edict,

and imagined, that by this act of false courage they might induce the people to forget the meanness of their former proceedings.

Our league, astonished at this instance of firmness, first believed it to be feigned, and engaged the *lion* to exert his strength; this produced a mutiny among the inhabitants of the capital, who invested the courts of justice, and surprized us by their transports of rage.

Silvo, shut up in his palace, did nothing but what he was told to do, and left the care of registering his edict to Siotra, who now began to exhibit strong symptoms of a ferocious mind. He ascended the grand stair-case, (leading to the hall where the parliament had assembled) swearing like a madman, his mouth foaming with rage, and his eyes sparkling with the fire of destruction; but his spirits were soon damped by his fears, and this proud hero, fit only to wage war against the timid inhabitants of the field, returned with the utmost speed, deeming himself happy to have escaped with his life, and to have been able to regain his carriage unaccompanied by his

his guards, who had forsaken him on the first alarm:

On his return to Selliasrev, he told Silvo that, in future, he must take it upon himself to see his will enforced, and Rueisnom, to whom the people were attached, undertook to prevent the commotion which we now began to apprehend. He was accordingly received with applause by the inhabitants of Sirap, who always regard a good countenance as an infallible sign of a good mind.

This was the first signal of alarm, and the sure presage of future disturbances. Since that time the people have revolted, burnt the guardhouse, and, at the risk of being fired upon, constrained those whom they suspected of hostility to their interests to bow down before the statue of an adored monarch, the sight of which drew tears from their eyes, and led them to form an afflicting comparison between his reign and the present.

Though Rueisnom succeeded in his attempt to promote a temporary calm, yet his conduct was marked by pusillanimity, and had a final tendency to augment rather

ther than diminish the derangement of the national affairs.

The acts of tyranny which were now daily exercised, greatly flattered our hopes; but notwithstanding the satisfaction which they caused us, we perceived the necessity of circumspection and the danger of exposure. This induced us to stop our proceedings for a time, in the full resolution, however, of seizing the first opportunity of renewing them. The ferment was strong and violent, and precipitation might lead to the subversion of that structure we had been so anxious to raise. I therefore profited by the present interval, to enjoy another species of amusement.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

A new Character introduced—New Embarrassments—Secret Conference.

IT is the fashion at the court of Abo for every woman to have her puppet. I accordingly chose the elegant marquis of Erveib, (who knows how to talk pleasing obscenity, and to compose epigrams and *calembourgs* better than any man in the kingdom) for my *attendant monkey*.—Wit is a glorious endowment, and certainly preferable to brilliancy of genius or depth of understanding: when I had adopted this frivolous marquis as the president of my office, the members of my party daily increased in number; plain prose and the language of common sense were expelled, and edicts, letters-patent, sentences of the privy council, royal declarations, and even majesty itself, were considered as proper subjects for a *calembourg*.

I praised

I praised this literary myrmidon to the skies, and by dint of care and attention I soon conducted him whither I had conducted so many others—to my voluptuous retreat at Nonairt, where pressing him to my heaving bosom, I convinced him that conjugal fidelity and respect for a sovereign were mere calembourgs !

I have before observed that Ennolac was no longer able to supply me with money ; it was in vain I complained ; every resource was exhausted, and though his will was good, his ability was gone. The immense deficiencies we had occasioned, gave rise to the most violent murmurs. I joined the cry of our patriotic citizens, and pretended to be equally alarmed with them ; but apprehending that an investigation of the minister's proceedings might probably lead to an exposure of my own, I gave him secret intelligence of the danger he would incur by remaining in office, in consequence of which—after various attempts to justify his conduct while in administration—he judged it prudent to decamp, and retired to the capital of a neighbouring isle, where I maintained a correspondence with him.

My

My embarrassments now daily encreased, as well as my continual dissipation and excessive prodigality, which I had not the smallest inclination to diminish. I looked forward to the time when I should become absolute mistress of the national wealth; but still every thing seemed to run counter to my wishes; and I was, moreover, harassed by my brother, who by his treasures being totally drained, was reduced to the last resource of a bad monarch—the necessity of plundering his subjects.

Silvo, whose confidence in the ministers devoted to us, was boundless, entirely relied on them for the management of affairs, the most essential to the welfare of the state, and signed, without reading, whatever we caused to be presented to him. From time to time, indeed, he enquired whether his people were happy, the answer to which question may easily be conjectured: Not one of their well-founded complaints was ever suffered to reach his ear, and the impudent affirmations of our creatures confirmed his tranquillity. Shut up in his closet for whole hours together, he trifled away his time, or else slept in that security into which we had plunged him, and in which we were studious to keep him. It was on
the

the article of *money* alone, that he was intractable. His extreme economy had degenerated into avarice, and his favourite maxim was, that every man in his dominions, even *himself*, should be contented with the mere necessaries of life. By conforming to this whimsical idea, we should have all formed a snug family party, and have sat down to the same table like downright cits. It must be confessed, that such an arrangement would have had something peculiarly amusing in it.

Necessity, however, dire necessity, compelled us, in a great measure, to comply with the wishes of my royal husband. We foamed with rage to think that in Abo there existed individuals richer than ourselves; men who by an extraordinary combination of fortunate occurrences had obtained the possession of millions. To some of these opulent *leeches*, we had occasional recourse, and borrowed money of them at exorbitant interest.

This conduct, so worthy of us, and which posterity will scarcely credit, lasted for some years; we dived into the purses of these Cresuses, and in exchange for the immense sums we drew from thence, we
gave

gave them *engaging smiles and flattering ogle*s.

These payments, which are easy to make for people who are indifferent about their reputation, were reserved for those, who basely begged our favour and protection; as to that class of brutes which are only to be satisfied by the idea of doubling their principal, we fed them with the *hopes* of gratifying their favourite passion. Thus to punish avarice is doubtless a work of merit.

Truth is not so far settled at the bottom of a well, but that it sometimes rises to the surface, and presents itself to public inspection; the torrent of our iniquities enlarged as it proceeded, and at length all our resources were totally exhausted. We then called a council, for money must be had, and if it had ceased to exist in Abo, we would have sought for it in the bowels of the earth.

My dear Siotra, ever fertile in expedients, suggested an idea which had never entered my head, and which proved of great advantage to us. This was to make proper use of the ascendancy I had acquired

quired over my husband, which was certainly extensive, where *interest* was not concerned. Since a desire to indulge my passions had kept me at a distance from him, the king had contracted, either from chagrin or inclination, a habit of deviating from his settled plan of economy, in favour of good living. Wine in particular began to have attractions for him, and all hard drinkers will agree with me, that when this passion once attacks a person, its vigour daily encreases, till it quite subdues its victim.

The king of Abo then occasionally sacrificed to Bacchus, and at those times he was always amorous. During the love-fit I could have made him sign the abdication of his kingdom; and inviolably faithful to his engagement, whenever it could be proved to him that his signature was not forged, we resolved to employ this method of procuring what we wanted from him.

It was scarcely possible for me to succeed in this laudable project, without being frequently with him, and flattering his favourite passion. Nothing could give him greater pleasure; I therefore constantly attended him, encouraged him to drink,
and

and even drank with him. I was careful however to double his usual portion, and when I saw him properly disposed, I employed both tears and supplications, and taking the pen, guided his hand, and the name of Silvo, which I made him trace on the paper, put me in possession of considerable sums, which I *loyally* divided with Siotra, as being the author of the invention.

Enneirb (the successor of Ennolac) now ceased to be refractory, and began to be convinced that he would not be permitted to *monopolize* the fruits of his office. The drafts I sent to him made him tremble, though at the same time they satisfied his conscience, which is well known to be *nice*. Besides the king's signature would serve him as a lawful justification, in case of events.

It appeared very astonishing to my husband, that I should have redoubled my attention at the very moment when he least expected it ; my tender concern for his sacred person gave him offence, and my affectation to make him write, whenever I found him in the humour, contributed not a little to augment his suspicions that my

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careless

careffes were not natural. He was determined to verify his conjectures, and I was caught in the only snare he ever laid, I believe, in the whole course of his life. After this I could get no more drafts, and, Enneirb, quitting the treasury to become prime minister, we were once more reduced to extremities.

We then thought it high time to forward the execution of our grand enterprize, which had failed through the unexpected resistance of the parliament. Siotra devoted his time to rallying the discontented. When I told him that all my hopes of obtaining from his majesty sufficient to satisfy, what we modestly termed, our *wants*, were destroyed, he yielded to my advice, and from that moment set himself at work to lay the foundations of a new government.

The dutchess of Cangilop, who alternately forfeited and regained my confidence, enjoyed, at this period, a great portion of my esteem; and knowing of what use she would be to us in promoting our schemes, I loaded her with favours.

We employed her to gain over the
princes

princes to our party, and this lascivious courtesan spared no pains to attach them to us. To prostitute her person was nothing to her; since she had been long used to it, and the ardour with which she espoused our cause, compels me to promulgate a truth that redounds highly to her credit—which is, that whoever had once enjoyed her secret charms, could never refuse her any thing she asked. This I know by experience.

Through her assiduity, our committees were attended not only by princes of the blood, but also the first nobles of Abo, and many of the clergy, so that our party became numerous and respectable. We then held a secret conference, and settled the particulars of our plan.

C H A P. IX:

The Pleasures of Saint-Duolc—Ministerial Operations—Progress of the Cabal—Disappointment—Conclusion.

AT this moment, while the nation, plunged into a lethargic sleep, groaned in silence over its losses, and devoured its griefs without yet daring to murmur, I continued to repose myself on the bosom of pleasure. I had not visited my palace at Saint-Duolc for some time, nor celebrated the sacred rites of Cytherea, in its voluptuous and expensive cabinets. I now resolved to repair thither, and to summon my associates to meet me.

As a preparatory step to these meetings, I summoned my partner in pleasure and politics to attend me. I introduced Siotra into this enchanted abode, and there renewed with this Adonis, whose body
was

was formed after the model of Hercules—those rapture-giving postures which had so often made me faint with extacy. I sometimes admitted the dutchess of Cangilop to these luxurious sittings; she was then of all our parties, an actress in every libidinous scene; our three bodies interwoven—as it were—with each other, formed the most extraordinary and most interesting groups. When enervated by excess of amorous intrigue, and exhausted in vigour, we returned to our plot, and so divided our time between pleasure and politics.

The cabal (so we called our confederacy) daily encreased, and the fatal moment of execution was near at hand; the only thing which retarded it was the implicit confidence which the king reposed in his minister Rakcen, whom, therefore, we were determined to remove.

The worthy archbishop of Sirap appeared to me a proper instrument for enforcing a measure so highly detrimental to the interest of the nation, for which reason we judged it prudent to encourage his hopes and flatter his ambition; and when we had winded him up to the desired pitch, I un-

dertook the communication of our designs to him.

“ What, said I, to the prelate, is it not a dreadful thing that we should suffer a man to remain at the head of affairs, who contrives to impede every just operation of government. Assist us with your good offices; your profession has supplied you with arms; you have only to make a proper use of them. Rid us, then, of this hydra, who exerts a despotic sway over us, and would fain destroy us; you are the only person to succeed in the attempt, by exerting that ascendancy which the king’s weakness of mind has given you over him. This you know to be true; employ, therefore, in our service that imposing air of gravity which marks your mien, and rely on our favour and protection in return.”

The prelate obeyed, and hastening to the king, represented to him the evil consequences of having an *heretic* in his service. The conscience of Silvo was alarmed, his fears were roused, and the artful primate, aware of the situation of his mind, improved his advantage, and at length succeeded in procuring an order for the dismissal of
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the minister, who was enjoined to leave the territories of Abo in twenty-four hours.

Our next care was to remove all the other members of administration who were known to be hostile to our views. For this purpose we had recourse to the lowest intrigues, and had soon the satisfaction of seeing the monarch surrounded by atheists, cheats, and traitors.

The infamous Liueterb again entered the lists; in conjunction with the worthless marshal Oilgorb, who was appointed commander in chief of our troops; Nitnerab was also the colleague of these ministers—thus had we every assistance it was possible to obtain.

I had the less reason to dread a disappointment, as the king was more remiss in his attention to public affairs than ever. Nolouf had assured him, that during his administration, the people must be happy; and his son-in-law Reihtreb, answered for the tranquillity of the Sirapians in particular, and for the felicity of the nation in general.

Every thing was prepared, Cangillop
and

and myself, already enjoyed, by anticipation, the fruits of our labours; and Siotra, my dear Siotra, beheld, with delight, the honours that were prepared for him: the emperor too, sighed for the arrival of that happy moment which had so long formed the object of his most earnest desires. The prince of Csebmál could with difficulty restrain the ardour of his troops, who waited with impatience, for the signal of destruction.

The moment at length arrived, when the punishment of those rash censurers who had dared to blame my criminal amours was to take place. The night, preceding the intended execution of the plot, I enjoyed all the charms of hope; I was tasting all its delights in the arms of Siotra and the fair Cangilop, when the imprudence of Csebmál impeded the progress of our plan. That prince, equally cruel with, though less politic than us, struck the first blow, and by that means prevented our success. On his account I am condemned to eternal shame and ignominy, unless my happier stars should once again prevail and place me at the top of fortune's wheel.

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On this signal of alarm, we were surprized to find that the Sirapians had fled to arms, repulsed the troops, demolished the state-prison, and massacred its governor. Thus in one fatal morn were all the hopes of years demolished. Siotra was compelled to fly ; at parting he embraced me with tears, and I charged him with my best wishes for my brother. In one sad hour I lost my all—favourite, lovers, in short all that was dearest to me on earth. The king was forced to repair to the capital ; where he was received with every demonstration of respect for his own sacred person, and with every mark of execration against the partner of his bed and throne.

The countess of Siotra reproached me with the ruin of her husband ; I wept, indeed ; but my tears were the tears of rage and disappointment. Rakcen was recalled ; but let it not be thought that I grieved at his return—no ; he is now in my power, and I shall soon be able to dismiss him more effectually. I now played the hypocrite with success, and exerted every art of duplicity ; I wrote to the stupid Sirapians, and endeavoured to palliate my conduct by ascribing it to youthful imprudence, and evil advice.

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In return for the mortification I experienced, I found means to insult the people by making them spectators of the sumptuous decorations of that asylum (the palace of Saint-Duolc) in which I had so often meditated their ruin, by permitting them to range over those elegant apartments embellished by the hands of luxury and libertinism; by suffering them to contemplate those rich and voluptuous beds in which the count of Siotra had begotten heirs for the nation.

The inhabitants of the capital flocked thither in crowds; and on beholding the magnificent furniture, the fruits of my rapaciousness, they were stricken dumb with grief, and the tears flowed from their eyes.

I wait, in patient tranquillity, to see what will be the issue of all this; if I am not grossly deceived it will still prove favourable to my wishes; the only effectual means of promoting the national good are expelled from the nation. The states, which have been convened for the purpose of rectifying abuses in the government, may continue to sit, and periodically to publish, with affected consequence, the stupid accounts of their more stupid operations.—

O! ye

O! ye inhabitants of Abo, you are destined to be fed with *words* instead of bread—or if bread ye have, it will prove to you the bread of sorrow.

F I N I S.